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Stockwell evaluates CIA activities

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"We are cycling directly into another war. The only reason we haven't gotten into one yet is because war is not popular and this is an election year," said former CIA agent John Stockwell in a speech Thursday in the Education Center.

Stockwell spoke about his experiences in the CIA and its current activities. He said the commission for national security in this country is the reason the United States has gotten itself into a war every 10 years throughout its history.

"I think I have some insights into this, since I have been a part of three wars," he said. "Not any of the 'big' wars, but wars in which young men were blown apart."

Stockwell joined the CIA in 1964 as a field case officer in the Vietnam War. He worked his way up the ranks until he became chief of the Angolan Task Force in 1977.

He resigned in 1977 and his book, *In Search of Enemies - A CIA Story*, details the CIA operation in Angola. The government is now confiscating the profits from the book, and Stockwell is under a court order prohibiting him from writing.

He explained that he joined the CIA when foreign policy was dominated by the domino theory, which is the idea that if one nation falls to the Communists, the surrounding nations would naturally follow. He said he was moved by Kennedy's speech with the phrase, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

"They (the CIA) came to campuses and recruited under the theme 'The best and the brightest,'" he said. "Young people are sucked into this."

"I thought I was going to join a noble organization with the noble purpose of keeping the world free for democracy," Stockwell stated.

"The fact that I got out of the CIA is a testimony that shows I wasn't impressed with it," he said. "I became absolutely convinced that the American people and the world should know the truth."

The CIA began operations 35 years ago at the end of World War II under the National Security Act of 1947. According to Stockwell, the CIA was not formed in the best interests of the nation, but because security officers from World War II were reluctant to go back to peaceful civilian endeavors.

A U.S. commission report stated the rationale behind forming the CIA. It said, "There are no rules in such a game. If the United States is to survive, long-standing American concepts of fair play must be reconsidered. We must learn to subvert, sabotage and destroy our enemies by more effective methods than are used against us."

Stockwell explained his perception of what the CIA actually does. "The CIA gathers intelligence and runs covert operations, which are secret activities designed to manipulate the affairs of other people into our own interest," he said.

The CIA has run several hundred covert operations each year

for 35 years, according to Stockwell. "At least one million people have been killed in direct actions in these operations, and virtually none of them were Soviet secret police (KGB) officers," he stated.

Stockwell told of one covert operation that the CIA ran in China for 19 years. He called it "a secret war against China. The Chinese called us 'the running dogs of capitalism' and we couldn't understand why they would call us that. We know we're nice people," he said.

The CIA was "destabilizing" China, according to Stockwell. He explained that destabilization means "making it so a society and an economy doesn't work."

He said, "The CIA does this by blowing up schools, economic structures, bridges and by killing political leaders. This makes the people so miserable that the government falls apart."

"Secrecy and power are the keys to these operations," he added. "China couldn't retaliate because we were the superpower. All they could do was eat it."

Stockwell explained that secrecy works in each of these operations. He cited a non-CIA example of secret operations, the bombings of Cambodia. "What was secret about the bombings?" he asked. "I suggest to you that there was no doubt in the minds of the Cambodian people that they were being bombed."

He explained, "Secrecy meant that the American people didn't know that the Cambodian people were being bombed. The point is, there was nothing on the face of the earth that the Cambodians could do to stop the bombs."

Stockwell related some of the background of the Bay of Pigs operation in Cuba. "When Fidel Castro took power, a lot of people

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